

April 24, 2021

To the Redistricting Committee:

Illinois politics and its politicians have earned themselves the dishonorable distinction of being among the most corrupt in the country. But the last few years have seen a sea change in the people who have been elected to our state and local governments and a massive shift in power away from corrupt machine politics.

The Assembly has a chance to turn a new page in one of the most important areas of political power: the redistricting process. In the past, redistricting has been used to consolidate power for the politically powerful and to cut out those challenging them. Given all of the other positive political changes in our state, I had hoped 2021 would be the year we finally had a transparent, inclusive process for drawing our state's maps. So far, the process feels like a continuation of the same machine power games Illinois saw previously: despite a thin sheen of public participation through poorly-attended hearings, there is no transparency or inclusion in the actual remapping process.

Democrats control Illinois's remapping through their majority in the state Assembly. Even as many Americans like me watch in horror as the Republican party embraces anti-democratic principles, Illinois Democrats' redistricting approach so far suggests them to be little better than their Republican counterparts when it comes to the democratic process. While it may be tempting to think that the ends justify the means, you need only look at Illinois's history of disenfranchisement and corruption to disillusion yourself of that notion.

Please, prove to our state and our country that we are actually in a new era of Illinois politics, and adopt a transparent, inclusive redistricting process.

Thank you for your consideration.

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